

2 *THE MORAL DANGERS OF THE AGE:*

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who are good enough to tell me that my words have helped them. I aim at nothing more than to point out to you who are now stepping on the paths of life, some of the moral dangers you will encounter, and to indicate methods whereby you may rise to success and dignity. May I ask you then to read my words, not lightly, but with seriousness, and to regard them as the friendly help of a guide-post which directs a traveller on an unknown road to the goal he desires to reach.

And be very sure of this,—the counsels meet you as you are about to take your place in the world of men, not to arrest, but to create your joy. This is an age which is sad at heart. Men there are who proclaim that the faculty of joy in Englishmen is dead. Now it is probably true that modern civilisation has well-nigh exhausted its efforts to multiply the sensational in the way of pleasure, and a black shadow of satiety and disbelief has fallen on this generation. When a late statesman's words are quoted—that life would be endurable but for its amusements, there is more than a satire intended. Amusements of late have grown reckless and full of moral dangers. A despair of being really happy would appear to have fallen on many, so they drive men on desperate courses, and the very faces of Englishmen in this generation have lost their old brightness. But be you sure of this : the sunshine